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DIRECT CERTIFICATION AVAILABLE ON A WEEKLY BASIS!

Previously, Direct Certification was updated monthly. However, the process to obtain Direct Certification will remain the same but available on a weekly basis.

Each week the Authorized Representative will receive an email notification when Direct Certification is available. The option of the additional Direct Certification file will help ensure benefits are provided to eligible students.

If your Local Education Agency (LEA) is participating in the [Direct Certification Flexibility](#)

[Option](#), the effective date the Direct Certification download is available from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is provided in the email.



If your LEA is not participating in the Direct Certification Flexibility Option and you wish to do so, complete the form and submit to DESE.

If you have any questions about the process, please call our office at 573-751-3526.



Reducing Food Waste: What Schools Can Do

Research from the USDA's Economic Research Service shows that **plate waste now = plate waste before** the updated nutrition standards. However, schools across the country are stepping up to the challenge with innovative new strategies to help reduce food waste and improve their bottom dollar.

There are some best practices that schools can do to increase student participation in the school meal

programs AND reduce food waste.

- **Recess before lunch** can reduce plate waste by as much as **30%**!
- **Extending lunch periods** from 20 to 30 minutes reduced plate waste by nearly one-third!
- If local health policies permit, **allow students to keep a lunch or breakfast food**

item for consumption later in the school day also helps.

- And using techniques listed on the [Smarter Lunchrooms Self-Assessment Score Card](#) can increase fruit and vegetable consumption by up to **70%**!

Recess before lunch can reduce plate waste by as much as 30%!

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More on Practices to Reduce Food Waste

Taking the most control of food waste in school lunch program takes systematic and ongoing steps. The USDA's Economic Research Service estimates that **31% of the overall food supply at the retail and consumer level went uneaten in the US in 2010.** A common occurrence in and outside of school lunch program.

Some additional steps on-site managers and head cooks can do to take control of food

waste include the following:

- Implement "offer versus serve," to allow students to decline certain menu items, including milk.
- Increase food choices so students can select a food they are likely to eat.
- Complete a food waste assessment to determine which food items are most frequently wasted.
- Compost food waste for school gardens.
- Apply student surveys to inform menu development, dining space décor and promotional ideas
- Display students artwork in the service or dining areas
- Participate in other food program promotions such as: Farm to School, Chefs Move to Schools, Fuel Up to Play 60 or Share our Strength.

Missouri's Farm to School Conference

Speaking of Farm to School, on October 20, 2015 University of Missouri Extension hosted a **Missouri Farm to School conference in Columbia.** If you were not able to attend, here are some noteworthy highlights.

The one day conference featured an array of local and national speakers that discussed how schools and producers can work together to increase the amount of local products served in school meal programs. A welcome was given and keynote speaker Anupama Joshi, Executive Director and Co-Founder National Farm to School Network. State agency and school food service directors shared their experiences and success stories on school gardening programs and the im-

pact that the instruction has on helping students learn from the life cycle of nature, nutrition and connecting the dots of where their food comes from.

Bob Gorman, Mountains Plains Region, Farm to School, USDA, discussed the USDA procurement regulations, forward contracting and geographic preference. These materials and much more are available at the [USDA Farm to School website:](http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school) www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school.

Breakout sessions were also provided for the producers to discuss topics relevant to meeting the needs of schools such as food safety, traceability and liability. Lunch and snacks was procured from local sources and catered by Columbia Public School's Culinary Arts Program. The conference ended with roundtable discussions and networking with pro-

ducers, agencies and food service directors separated by region. Interested in knowing how to get started in Farm to School? Start small is the way to go! Some notable contacts for you are:

Robert Gorman
Mountain Plains
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303-844-2507

Lorin Fahrmeier
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Lindsey Jones
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USDA's pictograph on Reducing Food Waste in Schools:
www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/Infographic-food-waste.pdf

Recipe Corner: Mediterranean Quinoa Salad

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In the [USDA Recipe for Schools](#), a nutritious whole grain called Quinoa (pronounced Kin'wa) is mixed with a colorful variety of vegetables for a tasty side salad! Quinoa is considered a whole grain in the school lunch program (technically, it is actually a seed) and is prepared much like other whole grains such as

rice. What are some of the advantages to serving Quinoa?

- It cooks quick taking just 10 to 15 minutes and its done.
- Quinoa tastes great providing a mild nutty flavor that is often times appealing to students.
- Quinoa has the highest protein content, so it's perfect for students wishing for meatless meal. Quinoa provides all 9 essential amino acids, making it a complete protein. Quinoa is a gluten-free and chole-

sterol-free whole grain, and is kosher for Passover.

For a quantity based recipe serving 50 or 100 students, the recipe can be found alphabetically listed in the Institute for Child Nutrition's USDA Recipe for Schools database: <http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDefault.aspx?qs=cEIEPTewMiZpc0lncj10cnVI>. The [Mediterranean Quinoa Salad](#) is a menu item in the secondary schools at Park Hills School District of Platte County for about a year now. Ronda McCullick, Food

Service Director, introduced this recipe along with another Quinoa recipe to students at a 6th Grade Center Iron Chef Competition.

The students got to watch as two chefs prepared the Quinoa dishes. They got to see it uncooked, smell it, learn about the ingredients that went into the recipe and then taste test them.

The [Mediterranean Quinoa Salad](#) was the chosen winner. It is a staff favorite and gaining more popularity with students as they continue to have it offered as an option.



Mo Parents Take Action 4 School Wellness

Announcement: Sub-grant applications are available for parent associations or organizations in schools that participate in the school lunch or breakfast programs.

The grant funding is being provided by Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Team Nutrition Grant, [Healthy Schools. Healthy Kids. Healthy Future Campaign](#).



The grant's purpose is to support parental involvement in school wellness initiatives.

The DHSS envisions the funneling of funds through parent organizations will achieve three goals:

1. to foster parental involvement in creating a healthy school environment;
2. to support school administration and staffs' ongoing school wellness efforts and
3. to increase opportunities for healthier school environments that provide life-learning opportunities for students to choose healthy foods and to be physically active.

The funds would offer an opportunity for parent organizations to address (a) foods offered outside of the school lunch program; (b) promotion of healthier foods and beverages; and (c) empowering parents to provide creative and low cost solutions to nutrition education and physical activity activities and events.

Funds will be awarded in the amounts \$500 or less to parent organizations or their affiliated school site. Funds can be used to address four categories: nutrition education, physical activity,

nutrition guidelines of foods sold outside of the school meal program and nutrition promotion.

An application is available to download at: <http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/schoolwellness/parents.php>

Due date is by 4:00 p.m.. Monday, December 21, 2015

Questions/Assistance:

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USDA
FNS

USDA Food and Nutrition Services' YouTube channel offers educational videos addressing ways to reduce food waste. The home site currently posts a series of videos on the related topic ranging in time from 8 to 22 minutes. Title of topics include the following:

- **Food Waste Challenge:**
An overview for K-12 schools
- **Q & A Reducing Food Waste in K-12 Schools**
- **Composting in K-12**
- **Reducing Food Waste in Schools—Back of the House**
- **Smarter Lunchrooms Movement:**
Tricks to helping students reduce food waste

The home site is found at
www.youtube.com/user/USDAfoodandnutrition/videos

Receive Recognition for Your Wellness Efforts:
Navigating the HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC): Smart Lunchrooms (SL) Initiative

Does your school promote health and wellness for your students? Get recognized and receive funding for your efforts by applying for the HUSSC: SL initiative with help from **Action for Healthy Kids!**

Wednesday, November 18, 2015
2:00-3:00PM CT

The United States Department of Agriculture's HUSSC: SL is a voluntary initiative established for schools to get recognized for their efforts to improve food and beverages, teach kids about nutrition, and help kids be more physically active. Join Action for Healthy Kids to learn what is required, who should be involved and where to find more information and resources about the initiative.

This webinar will be archived for those unable to attend the live session. You will receive information about future sessions from Action for Healthy Kids.

<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/events/webinars/event/336>

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<http://www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food>



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